

News from Rep. Stephanie Herseth
For Immediate Release
Contact: Russ Levsen, 202-226-4449

HERSETH ANNOUNCES \$35 MILLION FOR SOUTH DAKOTA PROJECTS IN HIGHWAY BILL

March 10, 2005, Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Stephanie Herseth today announced significant funding for South Dakota transportation projects included in the House version of the multi-year Transportation Reauthorization Bill. While the House version of the bill represents the first stage in the process, today's legislation already includes more than \$35 million for South Dakota projects. The bill was shelved last year over a dispute on total transportation funding. In last year's House version, not a single South Dakota project received funding.

Specific projects to receive earmarks include:

\$10 million for the design and construction of the new Meridian Bridge across the Missouri River in Yankton.

\$7 million for the Marion Road interchange on I-90 west of Sioux Falls, a key part of Sioux Falls' plans for future growth. This figure represents the full amount city leaders requested.

\$8 million for construction of the "Heartland Expressway," a four-lane highway on US 79 between Maverick Junction, and the Nebraska border.

\$1.1 million to construct a railroad underpass on Highway 34 in Pierre.

\$1.2 million to resurface US Highway 18 from Lake Andes to US Highway 50 on the Yankton Sioux Reservation.

\$2.3 million to resurface 10 miles of US Highway 18 from Okreek to Carter on the Rosebud Indian Reservation.

\$1.5 million to pave and curb Cheyenne River Tribe Route 900, in Eagle Butte.

\$1.2 million to extend the Sioux Falls Bike Trail to the Great Bear Recreation Area.

\$750,000 to redesign a "T" corner on BIA #2, 5 miles southwest of Kyle on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

\$250,000 to extend the bike trail in Pine Ridge to the SuAnne Big Crow Boys & Girls Center.

\$800,000 to extend the bicycle trail system in Aberdeen.

Lastly, \$1 million to improve the South Dakota Advanced Traveler Information System to ensure that drivers on South Dakota roadways have the most accurate and most up-to-date weather information.

Herseth said, "These are important projects for our state, and given the tight budget situation in Washington, I'm pleased to be able to secure \$35 million for South Dakota. As last year's bill contained nothing for our state, this \$35 million is a dramatic improvement. I will continue to work closely with Senators Johnson and Thune and Gov. Rounds in a bipartisan way to ensure that all of South Dakota's needs are met as this bill moves through the legislative process. As we all know, there are no Democratic or Republican roads or bridges, and we are all committed to working together on behalf of South Dakota."

South Dakota was without representation in Congress when this bill was considered in the House last year. As a result, South Dakota was the only state not to receive money for specific projects in that bill. Eventually, the House, Senate and White House could not agree on a total funding level, and the bill was pushed to this Congress.

Herseth added, “States like South Dakota, with smaller populations and large land areas, rely on a strong state-federal partnership to help maintain our roads and bridges. These essential infrastructure investments will help communities grow their economies, create jobs and improve the quality of life in South Dakota.” Herseth also noted that roads in Indian Country face unique challenges. “I’m pleased that we were also able to get some much needed help into Indian Country.”

#